



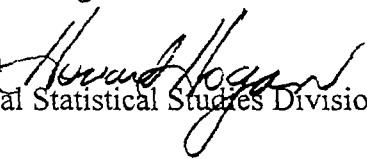
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DSSD CENSUS 2000 PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM LIST #G-25

MEMORANDUM FOR Brian Monaghan
Lead Assistant Division Chief for Censuses
Field Division

Attention: Management Training Branch

From: Howard Hogan 
Chief, Decennial Statistical Studies Division

Prepared By: Miriam Rosenthal
Decennial Statistical Studies Division

Subject: Observation of Office Operation Update/Enumerate and
Group Quarters in Tallahassee, FL

I observed office operations, Update/Enumerate, and Group Quarters enumeration in Tallahassee, FL on April 10-April 12, 2000.

Local Census Office Tour

The Local Census Office (LCO) manager gave me a tour. He had the only private office. There was no computer in his office, which he explained in two ways. First all computers were in the computer pod area. Secondly it forced him to circulate. He felt he was most effective being accessible.

The LCO covered 11 counties. Three counties along the Gulf of Mexico were Update/Enumerate (U/E). One barrier island, Dog Island, was both Update/Enumerate and Update/Leave (U/L). The LCO manager recommended that the whole island, which could only be reached by a ferry, should have been one type of enumeration area. One pseudo LCO, LCO 2969, in the middle of the LCO had property owned by Eastern Creek Indians. This pseudo LCO was assigned to the Pensacola LCO but logically should have been handled by Tallahassee.

The managers relied heavily on the Operation Control System 2000 reports. The reports helped monitor an operation's progress. For instance, a large discrepancy between "Percent Assignment Areas Completed" and "Percent Assignment Areas returned to LCO" had identified a bottleneck in returning distant assignments to the office, which was then corrected. Another case where one crew leader's assignment was not as far along indicated more people might be needed to do the work. The LCO manager felt that the OCS 2000 U/E reinterview software should have been activated sooner to help gear up for the operation.

The office had completed U/L, was finishing up U/E, and was getting ready for Nonresponse Follow-Up (NRFU). The office had participated as a late entrant in the Undeliverable as Addressed Redelivery (UAA) operation. About 40 percent of the 6,000 questionnaires were able to be delivered. The LCO manager thought that the UAA Redelivery operation was worthwhile, especially since it might reduce the NRFU workload.

I observed two check-ins in the office, U/E binder check-in and U/E questionnaire check-in. The binder check-in included making sure that the add page additions were reflected on the map. The reviewer stated that the office staff tries to make edits in the office rather than rejecting a binder. If questions remain, the binders are sent out again. The binders were often split up to complete the work. If so, they were reassembled in the office.

The U/E questionnaire check-in required manually entering a population count. We opened an envelope with four questionnaires that were refusals. The population count could not be filled in. The U/E refusals will be sent back to the field to scan in the questionnaires required the enumerator's social security number (SSN). The person doing the demonstration recommended making this information more automatic, rather than needing to cross-reference another list for the SSN. The system prompts the person to enter the information twice as an internal check.

The U/E telephone reinterview was just getting under way. The reinterview consisted of only an administrative reinterview, an automatic identification of enumerators with unusual results. The unusual results were referred to the crew leader or someone with local knowledge. If the results were not consistent with the area being interviewed, a sample of the enumerator's work was sent to telephone reinterview. The administrative reinterview and a supplemental reinterview will be conducted for NRFU, so it was seen as beneficial to have the reinterview procedure in place.

Update/Enumerate Field Visit

On the second day of my visit, the regional technician drove me down to East Point on the Gulf of Mexico to observe U/E. He said a lot of his job involves driving, and the cell phone provided by the Census Bureau does not have reception in rural areas. Outside of the library, crew leaders and the Field Office Supervisor (FOS) met to turn in work and introduce themselves to me. Some U/E enumerators had been assigned to crew leader training for NRFU. Their work was being reassigned. The goal was to complete U/E by the end of the week.

Four of us headed out in a car: the enumerator, crew leader, regional technician, and me. We decided that only the enumerator and I would go to the housing units. We enumerated on St. George's Island, a barrier island with many seasonal homes. The enumerator lived on the island year round. This familiarity helped a lot with enumeration. She understood that single family dwellings were sometimes subdivided for rental purposes. We approached one housing unit and someone in our car said that it looked like only one unit. She had actually rented one of the two units in the dwelling and thus identified a missed housing unit. Many of the housing units had rental signs with the realtor's name and number posted. She left a notice of visit at these units

and planned to call the real estate agent for information on the occupancy status. She even picked up the flyer for a house that was for sale, figuring that it might provide some housing unit answers (some housing units had no one home and no rental sign). These units she said would be difficult to determine any information about.

The enumerator had worked the 1990 census. She was using her 1990-issued briefcase to carry her work. She said nothing had been provided this time and the briefcase came in handy. Since then, the housing units had added 911 addresses. The housing unit had both a name (like "The Seagull") and a number.

We skipped over some housing units, looking for an interview. When we came across people, they reported that they had filled out their forms up north. She marked "usual home elsewhere." She said that that was a very common occurrence. She was supposed to fill out a form for the primary residence up north but did not. Since we were in an area of seasonal residencies, this procedure should have been emphasized in training.

We then came to the home of a permanent resident, whom she knew. She explained that she gave everyone a confidentiality notice, regardless of whether she knew them or not. She related a story of having done that and the respondent had told her that she appreciated her professionalism. The respondent reported a live-in boyfriend whom she might not have otherwise. The interview I observed was a short-form interview. The enumerator used the flash cards as instructed. The enumerator also elicited information about the neighbors' vacant homes.

The next units we stopped at had health inspection stickers on the windows. The enumerator took down the phone number on the sticker, so she could ask about the units. We left a notice of visit at an adjoining unit, where the permanent resident had indicated a person lived.

The enumerator said it was difficult to fill out the notice of visit and other paperwork at the doorstep because of the wind. She would sign and date forms at home. The regional technician noticed she was writing notes to use later to update the U/E binder. He insisted that she complete the work before she left the field.

We ended up going back to the units we had skipped and were able to complete the block. Then we canvassed the next block. We found a street name error and corrected it on the map. It had no living quarters and was annotated as such.

Group Quarters Enumeration

Several challenges had been encountered in the Group Quarters enumeration, including the following:

- The State of Florida moved up prison enumerations to April 4. The LCO did not have any GQ long forms as of April 4. The prisoners all received short forms. The LCO was able to easily xerox more short forms.
- A juvenile facility was concerned with confidentiality and refused to cooperate. The LCO and juvenile facility were working on getting the enumeration without collecting names.
- A job aid for French had been requested but not received.
- They did not have any GQ Spanish long forms. They had a couple of Spanish-speaking enumerators helping out with enumerating Spanish-speakers. The enumerators had also extended their language skills to helping persons in U/L areas fill out their forms.
- At a local jail, the guard told the prisoners that they did not have to answer the questions.

I saw two senior citizen facilities being enumerated. One place was brand new with only a few residents. The other place was well established. I found two shortcomings common to both locations. First, there was not any systematic long-form sampling. The GQ team seemed to ask long-form interviews of whoever they thought could get through the interview or chose to do the long-form interviews early in their visit before they felt rushed. Secondly, persons were interviewed within earshot of each other, compromising confidentiality.

At the well-established nursing home, the GQ enumerator team began by getting administrative records for the persons unable to complete the forms. Meanwhile, residents were contacted and sent to us to be interviewed. Many of the residents claimed that they had already filled out their forms. The crew leader stated that this had happened at another nursing home, and on that visit they had not enumerated any persons claiming to have already filled out their form. The GQ Field Office Supervisor (FOS) said that they should have been enumerated on the GQ visit. The people at this nursing home were enumerated, regardless of whether they claimed to have already filled out their form. It was not clear to me whether the residents at this nursing home had received their forms in the mail or whether they were being included on a relative's form. Only two of the residents owned homes outside of the nursing home. The GQ enumerators did not collect room numbers, so unduplicating responses would only have worked if it were done based on name. The GQ FOS did ask about whether any staff lived at the nursing home, which would have identified any embedded housing units.

The enumerators were told that all but two persons were Caucasian. Knowing this, they often did not ask the race question. One person offered that she was part American Indian. She was not asked her tribe. The age question was sometimes miscalculated from the date of birth information. The Hispanic-origin question was phrased "Spanish," not "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino." These problems could have been alleviated if flashcards were part of the GQ

enumeration. One enumerator asked respondents if they would like the confidentiality statement read to them. The enumerator did so, enthusiastically. The enumerator also was very persistent at getting answers to questions.

The long form questions on disability were confusing when asked by an enumerator. The question was a lot of words to read out loud and often times had to be repeated. Then, when the respondent answered yes to one part, it became confusing whether the respondent still had the stem of the question in mind when answering subsequent parts. I was unsure if they were responding “yes,” I can do that activity or “yes,” I have that disability.

The enumerators expressed some concerns to me. They did not like the training materials. They found information hard to reference out in the field. They wanted a picture ID. They did not use the envelopes or listing page until post-interview wrap-up. So, they found the envelopes to be extra work. They thought that the facility advance visit questionnaire to be a waste of paper, since only one page was transferred to their operation from all of the pages collected. The GQ FOS requested instructions on how forms should be collated before shipment to the Data Capture Center.

Future Operations Planning

Below is a list of suggestions for consideration in future planning.

- Enumerate on Dog Island using only one type of enumeration.
- Assign pseudo LCO 2969 to the Tallahassee LCO.
- Activate OCS 2000 well in advance of the start of an operation.
- Continue the UAA Redelivery operation in future censuses.
- Automatically enter the enumerator’s SSN into the correct field during questionnaire check-in.
- Emphasize that QA is a part of getting the operation done rather than something to be done if time allows.
- Provide regional technicians with cell phones that work in the field.
- Continue to hire local workers. They are the most familiar with the types of housing units and living situations common in their area.
- Provide U/E enumerators briefcases, such as will be distributed to NRFU enumerators.
- Emphasize in training the procedures for conducting interviews with persons who declare their usual home elsewhere.
- Have the enumerator update the U/E binder and maps when in the field to avoid transcription and recall errors.
- Provide in a timely manner enough GQ long forms, including Spanish GQ long forms.
- Explain and implement the long form sampling procedures or equivalent procedures in Gqs.

- Respect confidentiality in GQs. Do not conduct interviews within earshot of other respondents.
- Unduplicate GQ and HU address lists.
- Ask all questions, even if the enumerator feels like the question is redundant or self-evident.
- Provide flashcards for enumeration in GQs.
- Train enumerators better on the disability questions. When respondents were enumerated, the series of disability questions was ambiguous. It was confusing whether “yes” meant the activity was doable or “yes” meant the person had the disability.
- Create training materials that are easier to cross-reference during field work.
- Pare down the advance visit facility questionnaire to the one page passed on to the GQ field visit.
- Issue picture identification for enumerators.
- Provide instructions for how GQ forms should be collated for shipment to the data capture center.

cc:

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R. Harris (FLD)